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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05
ACDA-12 OES-07 EB-08 TRSE-00 ERDA-07 USIE-00
NSCE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /091 W

O 302148Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3475

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 9074

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN (CASTRO, RAUL) SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CASTRO'S PRESS CONFERENCE

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

1. AMBASSADOR RAUL CASTRO ON NOVEMBER 29 HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH WAS WELL ATTENDED BY AMERICAN AND ARGENTINE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES AND WHICH RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL COVERAGE IN THE BUENOS AIRES PRESS TODAY (NOVEMBER 30). THE CONFERENCE GREW FROM THE AMBASSADOR'S PROMISE UPON ARRIVAL TO TALK WITH THE PRESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER PRESENTING CREDENTIALS.

2. AMBASSADOR CASTRO LED OFF THE CONFERENCE WITH A SUMMARY OF THE VANCE VISIT AND AN EXPRESSION OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN ARGENTINA. PRESS QUESTIONS CENTERED MAINLY ON HUMAN RIGHTS, NON-PROLIFERATION AND THE TREATY OF TLAHELCO, AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. THE AMBASSADOR WAS ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE U.S. POSITION ON THE MALVINAS TO WHICH HE REPLIED THAT THE U.S. HAS TAKEN NO STAND ON THE QUESTION SINCE IT IS A BILATERAL MATTER BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND GREAT BRITAIN. ASKED ABOUT THE SAN JUAN EARTHQUAKE, THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE U.S. SENT CONDOLENCES BUT THAT QUICK
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ARGENTINE RESPONSE PRECLUDED THE NEED FOR RELIEF ASSISTANCE.
(COMMENT: THE ARGENTINE PRESS HAS SOUGHT ALREADY TO EXAGGERATE
OUR SUPPORT ON THE MALVINAS ISSUE, BASING THIS ON ITS
INTERPRETATION OF THE NOVEMBER 21 COMMUNIQUE.)

3. REPLYING TO A QUESTION, AMBASSADOR CASTRO
EXPLAINED THAT THE CONTROVERSIAL LIST OF
7,500 MISSING AND DETAINED PERSONS (SEE B.A. 8958) WAS COMPILED
BY HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND
PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT CARTER. MR. VANCE BROUGHT THE LIST
WITH HIM TO BUENOS AIRES AND SPOKE OF ITS EXISTENCE TO FOREIGN
MINISTER MONTES, BUT DID NOT DELIVER IT HIMSELF. INSTEAD HE
LEFT IT TO BE DELIVERED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, WHICH WAS
DONE BY THIS EMBASSY TOGETHER WITH AN OFFICIAL NOTE.
AMBASSADOR CASTRO EMPHASIZED THAT THE LIST WAS NOT OFFICIAL
AND THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULD NOT CERTIFY OR GUARANTEE
THAT THE NAMES ON THE LIST WERE AUTHENTIC; WE HAD SIMPLY AT THE
REQUEST OF PRESIDENT CARTER, TURNED OVER THE LIST TO THE
ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO DO WITH IT WHATEVER IT CONSIDERED
APPROPRIATE AND PRUDENT. THE EMBASSY HAS NOT REQUESTED ANY
REPLY NOR ANY CLARIFICATION CONCERNING THE LIST.

4. AMBASSADOR CASTRO SAID IN REPLY TO ANOTHER QUESTION
THAT NO ONE DENIES THAT THERE ARE DISAPPEARANCES,
BUT THAT THE RATE OF DISAPPEARANCES HAD "DECREASED EXTENSIVELY".
TO ANOTHER REPORTER'S QUESTION HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE U.S. POLICY
OF USING MILITARY CREDITS AS A LEVER IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA
HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ARGENTINE AND THAT HE EXPECTED TO SEE
FURTHER SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT IN TERMS OF NUMBERS AND CASES SOON.
PRESSED ON WHAT CONCRETE STEPS PRESIDENT CARTER HOPES TO SEE,
AMBASSADOR CASTRO SAID THAT ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT CARTER HAS NOT
SET ANY "GUIDELINES," SUCH THINGS AS PUBLICATION OF A LIST OF
PERSONS DETAINED AND THE CHARGES AGAINST THEM, UTILIZATION OF
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THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND APPLICATION OF THE ARGENTINE RIGHT OF
OPTION WOULD BE STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HE SAID HE WAS
NOT OFFERING A PROGRAM TO ACCEPT OPTION CANDIDATES INTO THE
U.S. BUT THAT EACH CASE WOULD BE STUDIED ON ITS OWN MERITS.

3. AMBASSADOR CASTRO PRAISED ARGENTINA'S DEVELOPMENT IN THE
NUCLEAR FIELD AS NUMBER ONE IN LATIN AMERICA AND SAID THAT AS
A POTENTIAL EXPORTER OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY, ARGENTINA COULD

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FORESEE MEMBERSHIP IN THE EXCLUSIVE CLUB OF LONDON. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT IN THE RECENT BILATERAL COMMUNIQUE, ARGENTINA INDICATED ITS WILLINGNESS TO RATIFY THE TLATELOLCO TREATY AND THE U.S., FOR ITS PART, WAS PREPARED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES TO PROVIDE ARGENTINA WITH HEAVY WATER AND WITH THE ENRICHED URANIUM IT NEEDS TO FULFILL IT CONTRACTS WITH PERU.

6. FULL TRANSCRIPT OF CONFERENCE FOLLOWS BY POUCH. SEE ALSO USIS MEDIA REACT CABLE OF NOVEMBER 30.
CASTRO

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